



Youth Development

Regional Context

The review of Cluster 1 youth development assets and challenges is best initiated by providing a context for understanding youth demographics and issues at the metropolitan or regional level. Many of these assets and challenges not only cut across sector boundaries, but City and county borders as well. This is illustrated in the following youth profile which is taken from a 1993 report prepared by Wayne State University on the Status of Detroit Area Youth. The profile summarizes the socio-economic status of youth, as well as selected health, substance abuse and educational issues facing youth in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb Counties and is based primarily on 1990 census data.

Social and Economic Status of Children

- ❖ The number of youth under the age of 18 in metropolitan Detroit has dropped approximately 14% since 1980 (down 17% in Wayne County, 8 % in Oakland County, and 17% in Macomb County)
- ❖ 74% of Metro Detroit youth live in communities surrounding the City of Detroit
- ❖ 83% of all African American youth in Metro Detroit live in the City of Detroit
- ❖ Single mothers account for 19% of all households in Detroit. The rates by county are: 12% in Wayne County; 5% in Oakland County; and 5% in Macomb County.
- ❖ 19% of all youth under the age of 18 in Metro Detroit live in poverty. This includes 30% of Wayne County youth, 8% of Oakland County youth and 7% of Macomb County youth. As of 1990, the Detroit had the highest youth poverty rate, 46%, of any city in the country.

Youth Crime

- ❖ Youth arrests declined 23% from 1980 to 1990 in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties. Detroit's youth arrest rate declined 38% during the same period.
- ❖ The crimes with the highest number of youth arrests in Detroit in 1990 were narcotics sale, weapons possession, possession of a stolen vehicle, and assault.
- ❖ In Detroit, the proportion of new juvenile offenders, as compared with repeat offenders, grew from 38% in 1975 to 61% in 1990.

Health/Substance Abuse

- ❖ Infant mortality rates by county are 16 deaths per 1,000 live births in Wayne County and 8 deaths per 1,000 live births for Oakland and Macomb Counties. The rate for the City of Detroit is 20 deaths per 1,000 live births.
- ❖ The out-of-home placement rate per 1,000 children was 10.5 for Wayne County, 2.6 for Oakland County and 1.8 for Macomb County.
- ❖ Substance abuse treatment program admissions in Detroit have declined in recent years in the 14 to 20 age group, but have increased significantly in the 30 to 39 and 40 to 54 age groups.
- ❖ The incidence of substance abuse by youth appears low and relatively stable.

Education

- ❖ Dropout rates for 1990-91 were 14% in Wayne County, 3% in Oakland County and 4% in Macomb County.
- ❖ Dropout rates in the Detroit declined from 41% for the class of 1986 to 28% for the class of 1991.
- ❖ Of all students who enter the 9th grade in Detroit, approximately 53% graduate *on time*.

Cluster 1 Youth Development Profile

This section of the report describes the youth development assets and resources in Cluster 1. Also included is a brief review of perceived “gaps” in resources as well as a summary of the chief issues facing Cluster youth. These existing assets and challenges provide the basis for the youth development component of the Community Visioning workshops.

As illustrated in Table 2 in the socio-economic profile section of this report, Cluster 1 has a slightly higher population of youth under the age of 18 than the city of Detroit as a whole (32% vs. 29%). In terms of school enrollment, approximately 6% of the Cluster’s youth are enrolled in a pre-primary school, 75% are enrolled in an elementary or high school and 18% are enrolled in college. This compares with 6%, 71% and 22% respectively for the city as a whole. Also, as described in the socio-economic section of this report, the percentage of Cluster 1 residents with at least one year of college is education is half of the proportion for the city of Detroit.

Another socio-economic aspect of the Cluster which often has a bearing on youth development is the household structure. In Cluster 1, approximately 34% of youth live in female-headed households and 31% live in married couple households. The proportions for Detroit overall are very similar at 30% for both of these household types. Further, the poverty rate for the Cluster—often closely related to

household structure—is approximately 37%. Combined, these factors shape the environment in which Cluster 1 youth live.

Youth Development Assets and Resources

A number of youth-related assets and resources were identified through the focus group process that included written surveys and guided discussions. The youth development focus group for Cluster 1 was divided into two groups—an arrangement preferred by the youth—one for young people and another for adults. Approximately 20 residents attended the youth development focus group, including 7 youth.

Following is a list of *some* of the organizations providing youth related programs and services ranging from tutoring and mentoring programs to recreation, job training and placement programs. These resources were identified through the focus groups as well as through the Cluster Board's Youth Development Subcommittee. Many of these assets and resources are Cluster specific, but the list also includes some city-wide youth development resources.

Wayne County Community College
Boy/Girl Scouts
Emmanuel Community Center
Lipke Recreation Center
Operation Get Down
St. Jame's PAL Center

Boys/Girls Club
Detroit Public Schools
Evans Recreation Center
Cluster 1 Churches
11th Police Precinct
Career Works

There are additional community assets in Cluster 1 which may not offer specific programs such as those described above, but do serve as youth development resources. Lincoln, Knapp and Wilder Branch libraries, for example, are resources for youth and others in the community. There are also a number of parks and play fields in the Cluster that provide recreational outlets for area youth (Map21). New Detroit, Inc., although outside of the Cluster is also perceived as an asset or resource because of the grants available to Cluster programs. The W.K. Kellogg Foundation's commitment to the Northern High School area also includes a portion of the Cluster and is perceived as an asset.

Youth Development Issues

The youth development Subcommittee and focus groups also offered their insight into the **major** issues facing Cluster 1 youth. The following list focuses on what Cluster residents consider to be the most significant youth development issues or challenges.

- ❖ Lack of jobs
- ❖ Lack of sufficient extracurricular/productive activities (either paid or unpaid)
- ❖ Public safety (in neighborhoods, at bus stops, on the bus)

- ❖ Negative perception of youth
- ❖ Drugs/substance abuse issues
- ❖ Inadequate police presence & poor police/community relations
- ❖ Poor maintenance of existing parks.

Again, this is not an exhaustive list of all of the issues facing Cluster 1 youth, but it does include what the community perceives to be the most pressing challenges. It is also evident that a number of these issues are not restricted to youth and overlap with other planning areas as well.

“Gaps” in Existing Programs and Services

Finally, while Cluster 1 youth have access to a variety of social programs, there is also a perception among some Cluster residents that the social and educational needs of youth are not being fully met and that the outlook for Cluster youth would be improved by meeting these needs. These “gaps” in youth-centered programs and services include existing programs in need of expansion or replication as well as additional programs and services not currently available in the Cluster. There is also a need for improved visibility and publicity of existing programs.

Focus group participants identified several gaps in programs and services for Cluster 1 youth. Among them is the need for additional mentoring programs, including increased involvement of the corporate community. Cluster youth would benefit from more parenting programs for both adults and youth. Perhaps not surprisingly, in a Cluster with relatively high unemployment and under-employment more programs related to employment issues such as job training and placement, career counseling and skilled trades education should be developed or expanded. Focus group participants also indicate that Cluster 1 would benefit from additional violence prevention programs and structured outdoor educational and recreational activities. It is also believed that the public libraries—Lincoln, Knapp and Wilder—can help to fill some of these gaps through expanded services and hours of operation.

This section of the report has briefly summarized the “state of the Cluster” with respect to youth. The resources, assets and issues described here speak to the Cluster’s strength in the area of youth development as well as the challenges and provide the basis for discussing “what should be” as part of the Community Visioning workshops.

Summary Of Youth Development Assets, Opportunities & Issues

Assets	Opportunities & Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Large population of young people ❖ Youth tutoring & mentoring programs ❖ Youth recreation programs ❖ College counseling programs ❖ Job training & placement programs ❖ Public libraries (3) ❖ Neighborhood parks & play fields ❖ Public schools ❖ Faith-based youth programs ❖ Access to financial resources (New Detroit, W.K. Kellogg Foundation through Northern Area Assn.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Lack of employment opportunities ❖ Insufficient extracurricular activities ❖ Public safety, sense of security ❖ Drugs/substance abuse issues ❖ Lower educational attainment than city overall; higher dropout rate ❖ Poor police presence/community relations ❖ Poorly maintained parks & play fields ❖ Negative perception of youth ❖ Insufficient job training/placement services. ❖ Insufficient skilled trades training opportunities